









available for its guidance. Already the authorities have perceived that a railway something more than the substitution of an iron for a mud road; the very small experiment they have made has brought into view a few of the side issues which are raised by the making and running of railways, and though what has been revealed is as nothing in comparison to what remains hidden, it is enough to impress the Government with the importance of their selection of a Directorate of Railways, and the official or officials selected, with the gravity of the responsibility. Of course it may be said that, though Chinese statesmen have no knowledge of their own in reward to railways, the experience of the whole Western world is available for them, and the best foreign advice is at their service. But the importation of foreign advisers—even without the Korean "0"—is precisely the experiment the Chinese most dread; it is the visible rock to which they wish to give a wide berth, even at the risk of shipwreck on the shoals which are unseen. And who does not sympathize with this feeling? Who will advise in the selection of an adviser? Imagine a wealthy but untaught man going into the world to choose his teachers; or a book-worm suddenly become heir to a great industry requiring the utmost practical skill and scientific knowledge to carry on, and one gets some idea of the position in which the Chinese find themselves *vis-à-vis* to these demands for improvement. And when to the suspicious nature of the Chinese you add the obstruction of outside advice from every quarter, each candidate assuring the Chinese that he alone is their real friend, you get a combination whose product is, and can only be, confirmed revulsion from all foreign aid whatsoever. Such we take to be the true attitude of the Chinese Government at the present moment. That is not to say, however, that in some real or fancied emergency the Government may not fall into the arms of some philanthropic schemer—probably the least worthy of all the suitors for favour; such a contingency indeed is far from improbable. But, having regard to actualities, we must consider that the one thing which the Chinese Government will not and cannot do, at the present stage of proceedings, is to place any foreigner or any group of foreigners in a position of authority and power in connection with the construction of railways. And as they cherish the design of making their railways out of indigenous material, so they will seek also for their directing power in the ranks of their own officials. The one idea may prove as unfeasible as the other, and yet both seem to occupy a necessary place in the unfolding panorama of railway progress, and both ideas may have to be worked out, whether to success or failure, in order to provide a basis for further advance.

In the search for an individual qualified to act as Imperial Commissioner, Minister, or Chief Director of Railways, it is natural that the attention to the Government should be directed to an official who has already shown himself unopposed by novel situations, to whose record we directed attention the week before last. Among native officials who have never travelled beyond the China coast line there are probably few known to fame who are better fitted than Chou Fu for the post of Director of Railways. It is needless to recapitulate his special qualifications, on which we expatiated at sufficient length on the 18th May. Our remarks on that occasion had reference to an appointment of a very different kind, in which Chou Fu's political and diplomatic ability would have served him most appropriately. The same order of talent is as much needed in the direction of railways in China, but it is by no means all that is required. Technical knowledge is as great a desideratum, and of that also Chou Fu may be allowed a full average share. Capacity for organization is also required, and to that we are not aware that he has ever shown any special claim. The construction of the Tongshan line has no doubt excited Chou Fu's spirit as chief promoter, to gain the experience and the management has also afforded the public some insight into his capacity. The result has been to show that he shies not at a promoter, and general director, though an organizer or supervisor of practical work. This is no more than to be expected of one who had no means of knowing anything about the operations which he was called on to undertake. Indeed, the little knowledge which Chou Fu had gained of canal and water-ways was rather a snare to him than otherwise, since it gave him the notion that he was somewhat of an engineer. A trifle more experience would no doubt convince him that railway work differs essentially from digging ditches and throwing up embankments, and that the employment of skilled officers cannot be arbitrarily interfered with without danger, and that trained hands cannot be arbitrarily replaced by the first coolie that presents himself. The selection of men with exclusive regard to their capacity for their duties, and not with a view to provide a livelihood for troublesome *prattlers*, is an elementary lesson which Chinese officials are naturally slow to learn, but it is being gradually brought home to them, nor can it be fairly laid to the charge of the individual that he has not completely mastered the lesson in advance of all his competitors.

On the whole, among the class of untravelling Chinese officials there are perhaps few who could advance a better claim than Chou Fu to the honourable distinction of Director-General of Railways. But the choice of the Government is not restricted to untravelling officials, in an undertaking which is wholly foreign in its origin and organization, one who has had the inestimable advantage of studying the operations of railways in other countries, and more especially during a long residence in that country which is the home of all the railways in the world, *caters paritatem*, be the best man to entrust with the task, and the advantage of the State. A knowledge of foreign languages would add enormously to the independence and the authority of the Minister or Imperial Commissioner for Railways, while family prestige and exalted rank and proved devotion to the Throne would reconcile all parties to the appointment of one who combined in his own person these widely different qualifications, which have never before been united in one individual. The honours could scarcely be more appropriately bestowed than on the head of one of the most illustrious families in the empire, the son of the enlightened patriot and true friend of his country, the lamented Tsing Kwo-fan—*Chinese Times*.

#### THE HORRORS OF CHRISTIANITY.

A few months ago the Hoang-ho—the most shifting and treacherous of all Chinese rivers—suddenly burst its artificial embankments and rolled the huge volume of its turbid, yellow flood across the adjacent plains, carrying terror and destruction over the mysterious land where the teat-plants grow. The disaster was one which has happened a score of times since the Hoang-ho first issued from the interior and poured its waters down towards the eastern sea, and it is one which will recur periodically until the great river is obliterated from the map. The Sin Fat of the present day, like the duplicate Sin Fat who owned a patch of earth on the great plain in the days of Augustus, was slumbering in his quiet, lopsided home when the awful instant of annihilation arrived, and the billows rolled in a deadly twenty feet deep over his dwelling, and his little household, and bore him and his family and his household gods away on its bosom, while his soul departed to the land where *Cerberus* dwells among the stars. His neighbour, Hang-Ye, awoke upon his tea-chest to realize that Death was at his door. The summons came alike to Sing-Ling in his gin-case, and to the opulent Ki-Nan in his palace of fantastic architecture and impossible design, and each of them remembered, possibly, as the sound of the rushing torrent reached his ears that a thousand years ago another Hang-Ye, slumbering on a tea-chest of a pattern that never varied since the days of the Pharaohs, and another opulent Ki-Nan, lounging in a palace that was as fantastic in its architecture as that of his successor had been the same ominous warning, and in like manner, vanished for ever from the land of their birth, to be a stupendous tragedy, and it furnished a brilliant subject for the poet who sings in unmanageable gridiron characters in the Flowery Land, but the million or two of lives which very sacrificed in that awful visitation left no perceptible gap among the teeming millions of the Middle Kingdom. The waters subsided at last, and the cultivators who had escaped the general devastation ventured down again from their places of refuge to dig out their own farms and silently annex those of their drowned compatriots; the vice-plant and the tea-shrub started afresh; the Hoang-ho found itself a new bed; and except for a thick stratum of rich alluvial soil, a threatened famine among the agriculturists whose farms—mostly caged from the dead Sin Fats whose remains are still tossing restlessly in Gulf of Pechelo—have not had time to produce new crops, and who have been further ruined by the expense of buying new Josses to replace the ones which floated away in the general ruin, and a thick, muddy stream of Christian charity and maudlin exhortation, the overflow of the Hoang-ho is a matter of history.

For of Christian charity—as Christian charity is understood by the muddled churches who send tracts to the Frozen Zone, and forks and tin and boots and the Shorter Catechism to the Digger Indians in his cave—there is unhappily no end. The British savage of Whitechapel maintains a miserable existence on garbage and offal; the sewing woman of London tries in vain to believe in the doctrine of Eternal Justice, of peace on earth and goodwill to men, as she rehearses daily the piteous Song of the Shirt—the saddest story ever told in verse; the grinder of Sheffield makes some 10s. per week at a murderous trade whose very breath is destruction, but these and all others of their kind may live and toil and die and go to destruction in their own way, so long as there remains one far-away Carib who has not heard the touching narrative of Balaram and his Asa, or one forgotten Fantee who is yet a stranger to the joyous story of how Goliath used to be eleven feet high in Gath. The toilers who die from hunger almost daily in London keep on dying while London sends its surplus wealth to rebuild the water-logged Joss-house of the strange idolator beside the Hoang-ho; the hunger-maddened women who throw themselves into the Thames, and have the misfortune to be fished out alive, are sternly admonished and duly sent to goal by the same tender-hearted Christians who are weeping tears of misery over the anguished Hong Lee, who hasn't any rice; and in general the men of faith go on according to the good old rule which bids them leave their own countrymen to perish at their doors while they pour forth the stream of their pious generosity upon the woes of the remotest heathen at the other end of this badly-trimmed planet. All sorts and conditions of greedy and corpulent saints take a hand in the good work. The sweeper who grinds out human lives—the lives of helpless, wretched, joyless girls and stunted boys, and worn out prematurely-aged women—in his suffocating workrooms at a remuneration of four or five shillings per week, contributes his mite to the washed-out Chow; the pious warehouseman, who discharges the miserable shirt-maker at elevenpence a day because he has found another victim who will accept tenpence, sends his prayers and his cheque to aid the opium-soaked confectionist of Eastern Asia; the Anglican parson, whose wheeled carriage enjoys a lavish stipend of 100, per week, lends his aid to the cause of charity, and the rack-renting landlord and a hundred other commandments bring up the rear of the great procession. For the glory of Christian England shines forth in her missionary enterprise, and her hand is for ever open to aid the distressed heathen and to dispel the moral darkness of the neglected cannibal, and half the uncivilized earth is holy ground because there the martyrs of Britain's churches have shed their blood for the propagation of the faith, and meanwhile concerning three millions of starving Britons at home no prominent philanthropist cares a solitary curse, and no church has time to worry with a cent.

The missionary system is English—strikingly English—in all its details, and being English, Australia has naturally adopted it with acclamation. The Chinaman, it is true, wears no poetic aspect in this country, for Australia has seen him too closely to appreciate his beauties, but the swamped-out Mongol beside the Hoang-ho is a distant heathen—with whom we have nothing to do—in distress, and thus he fulfils all the requisite conditions as an object of public charity. Consequently the benevolent ladies and lavish donors of Melbourne have taken up his case, and subscriptions are pouring in for the aid of the afflicted Sin Fat, who is understood to be sadly shovelling the frogs out of his half-drowned home in a far-off land. Whether the money will ever reach him no one knows. As a rule, money subscribed in such cases is mostly absorbed by the salaries of the hired philanthropists into whose hands it passes, and by the time it has been sifted through treasurers and secretaries, foreign agents, mandarin interpreters, missionaries, native teachers, saved Chinamen, and benevolent officials of various grades, the amount that is likely to remain for the wretched Buddhist beside the Hoang-ho will hardly be worth notice. Even supposing, however, that none of the absorbent Christians, who are accustomed to live upon public benevolence and annuity, annex a fraction of the national charity, the biggest amount that can be raised will hardly suffice to furnish one square meal apiece to the pagan millions who are supposed to be left destitute in Asia. The total would, indeed, do more to ease the miseries of the hundreds of starving, matted, and weary Australians whose homes are in the dumpy grass of the Melbourne or Sydney parks, and who, in the most prosperous of Australia's cities, are slowly dying of want and privation; but these outcasts are only white men of our own race and our own creed, and because they are not aliens and lepers, and because they are close at hand instead of being located in some misty region on the uttermost confines of geography where a European is hailed as a "foreign devil" and is liable to be stationed on sight, their sufferings must find their own remedy. The philanthropists of Australia are too busily occupied with the miseries of Sin Fat to spare time for any smaller and less absorbing considerations.

Besides the Melbourne citizen who is dying of hunger in a land of plenty has institutions of the Charity Organisation Society order to appeal to. The money which these bodies receive in charity is mostly absorbed, it is true, in the salaries of their officials, but still they do much service in various ways. The hungry vagrant who applies for a meal is told by a highly-paid functionary to call to-morrow, or the day after, or some time in the central part of next week, when possibly something will be done for him; and then, supposing he should hold out as long, he generally learns that the swing to his non-attendance at

church, or to the fact that he has been in goal for having no visible means of support, or because his wife drinks, or his brother has committed bigamy, he is not a fit subject for human assistance. Most of the money which is left after paying the salaries of the benefactors in charge is employed in collecting evidence to show that the particular applicant in question is not sufficiently apostolic for charitable recognition, and, funds for enquiry purposes being plentiful, it naturally follows that only a scanty pauper here and there manages to present a sufficiently stainless record to satisfy the bowdler committee of investigation. The indigent white citizen brings thus provided for, public charity is left free to expend itself in relieving the woes of the Asiatic pagan, and if in his case there is no elaborate machinery provided for sifting the morals of each insolvent Chinaman—if the benevolent Christian population of Australia is invited to extend a helping hand alike to the unheeded murderer, the fan-tan sharp, the Mongolian sneak-thief, and the opium-fend, without raising any question as to their fitness for such benevolence, it is only necessary to point out that missionary enterprise has always been built that way.

The gruesome snuff of the British missionary system—now in process of transplantation to Australia, the lying and hypocritical which attach to it at every step, the cold, callous brutality which forms its one unchanging feature, the ignorance and delusion on which the boss Pharisees of the propaganda have built what they blasphemously term the greatest Christian movement of the age, are a living disgrace to the Anglo-Saxon race. Within the last three or four years hundreds of thousands of pounds have been sent in sending forth fat apostles through Western Asia, with the result that a solitary Moslem has shaken off the fetters of the faith which forbade him to touch intoxicating liquors, and has become a Christian and a sot, and thousands upon thousands more have been expended on missions to the Hebrew race, from which not one convert has resulted. And as a branch of the same movement money has been poured forth like water to buy food for starving Hindus, and distressed Syrians, and bogged Chinamen, and broken-down Africans—and meanwhile the only mission that goes forth to Whitechapel consists of "Jack the Ripper," the policeman and the coroner, the only gospel that is carried to Ireland is borne by the police baton, and the soldier's bayonet, a British garrison in Egypt is exacting taxes by means of native agents armed with the raw-hide whip from a nation which is as hungry and as bitterly oppressed as all the aggregated Chinamen who have ever been washed out since the days when the Great Wall was first constructed, another British army is turning Burma into a desert, and still Britain leads the way in missionary enterprise, and acts as the pioneer of the Gospel in the dark places of the earth. There are more British subjects starving in the United Kingdom to-day than there are beside the Hoang-ho; there are probably as many starving men and women in Australia in proportion to the population of the country as there are in the whole of China; but the miserable hypocrisy of the day merely bids them starve and trust in Providence and apply to the Charity Organisation Society, or else it hires wealthy persons to read their elaborate sermons about the joys of poverty and the wickedness of having food and shelter, and reserves its practical Christianity for the opium-sodden leper—the hereditary enemy of our country and our race.

Australia is, comparatively speaking, a land of comfort. It is an undying disgrace to her social and political system that there should exist within her borders even one white citizen who is without a home and without food, and it is a sign of the future domination of the land that the great organ of pity in the land that while there is not one, but hundreds and thousands of hungry, ill, and suffering people, the stream of public charity should be diverted from them to the distant Chinaman, whose own Government has already taken for more effectual means to relieve his distresses than the rulers of Australia have adopted for the aid of their own countrymen. When want and misery have been extinguished in this continent, when the millions of our poverty-stricken brethren in England, Scotland, and Ireland have been rescued from indigence; when the starving Egyptians and Burmese who have been ruined by the blessings of British government have been relieved, when the Arabs of the Soudan whose homes our amateur Australian butchers were sent out to burn and plunder have been compensated for the wrong which we did them—then it may possibly be time to lend a helping hand to the Mongol of the Hoang-ho. But it is needless to say that the Mongol will never return the kindness thus shown him. In Australia's day of national disaster no Buddhist of Peking will subscribe his tacks for our assistance, and when China feels herself strong enough to settle international difficulties with the sword, the men to whom the pretended Christians of Australia now tender their assistance will help to swell the swelling ranks of the Chinese army, and the junks will carry to our shores. But Australian Christianity rises superior to any considerations of brotherly humanity or common sense. The blind cripples who haunt the streets of Sydney and Melbourne imploring alms are moved on by the police; the old broken-down pioneers who have given up the battle of life in despair are kicked and cuffed and starved in our so-called benevolent asylums; the outcasts who camp in the public parks are either left there or are clubbed by the police and run in and sentenced to hard labour and short rations for the crime of being poor and homeless; and the penniless victims of accidents or disease die unattended in a hovel or a cell because there is no room for them in the overcrowded hospitals of this Christian land; but still there is pity and sympathy for the drowned-out Chow, and he who gives to the Chinaman lends to the Lord.—*Sydney Bulletin*.

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